

Federal Maritime Commission

§ 502.11

proceeding under this part, such notice to be accompanied by a simple statement of procedural or other grounds for the denial, and of any other or further administrative remedies or recourse applicant may have where the denial is based on procedural grounds. [Rule 8.]

§ 502.9 Suspension, amendment, etc., of rules in this part.

The rules in this part may, from time to time, be suspended, amended, or revoked, in whole or in part. Notice of any such action will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. [Rule 9.]

§ 502.10 Waiver of rules in this part.

Except to the extent that such waiver would be inconsistent with any statute, any of the rules in this part, except §§ 502.11 and 502.153, may be waived by the Commission or the presiding officer in any particular case to prevent undue hardship, manifest injustice, or if the expeditious conduct of business so requires. [Rule 10.]

§ 502.11 Disposition of improperly filed documents and ex parte communications.

(a) *Documents not conforming to rules.* Any pleading, document, writing or other paper submitted for filing which is rejected because it does not conform to the rules in this part shall be returned to the sender;

(b) *Ex parte communications.* (1) No person who is a party to or an agent of a party to any proceeding as defined in § 502.61 or who directly participates in any such proceeding and no interested person outside the Commission shall make or knowingly cause to be made to any Commission member, administrative law judge, or Commission employee who is or may reasonably be expected to be involved in the decisional process of any such proceeding, an ex parte communication relevant to the merits of the proceeding;

(2) No Commission member, administrative law judge, or Commission employee who is or may reasonably be expected to be involved in the decisional process of any agency proceeding, shall make or knowingly cause to be made to any interested persons outside the Commission or to any party to the pro-

ceeding or its agent or to any direct participant in a proceeding, an ex parte communication relevant to the merits of the proceeding. This prohibition shall not be construed to prevent any action authorized by paragraphs (b) (5), (6) and (7) of this section;

(3) "Ex parte communication" means an oral or written communication not on the public record with respect to which reasonable prior notice to all parties is not given, but it shall not include requests for status reports or communications regarding purely procedural matters or matters which the Commission or member thereof, administrative law judge, or Commission employee is authorized by law or these rules to dispose of on an ex parte basis;

(4) Any Commission member, administrative law judge, or Commission employee who is or may reasonably be expected to be involved in the decisional process of any proceeding who receives, or who makes or knowingly causes to be made, an ex parte communication shall promptly transmit to the Secretary of the Commission:

(i) All such written communications;

(ii) Memoranda stating the substance of all such oral communications; and

(iii) All written responses and memoranda stating the substance of all oral responses to the materials described in paragraphs (b)(4)(i) and (b)(4)(ii) of this section;

(5) The Secretary shall place the materials described in paragraph (b)(4) of this section in the correspondence part of the public docket of the proceeding and may take such other action as may be appropriate under the circumstances;

(6) Upon receipt of an ex parte communication knowingly made or knowingly caused to be made by a party to a proceeding, the Commission or the presiding officer may, to the extent consistent with the interests of justice and the policy of the statutes administered by the Commission, require the party to show cause why his or her claim or interest in the proceeding should not be dismissed, denied, disregarded, or otherwise adversely affected on account of the making of such communication;

(7) An ex parte communication shall not constitute a part of the record for